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We encourage our readers to consider submitting material on early North American numismatics to CNL for publication. In general, this includes coins, tokens, paper money, and medals that were current before the U.S. Federal Mint began operations in 1793. However, there are certain pieces produced after the 1793 date that have traditionally been considered part of pre-Federal numismatics and should be included. We cover all aspects of study regarding the manufacture and use of these items. Our very knowledgeable and friendly staff will assist potential authors to finalize submissions by providing advice concerning the text and help with illustrations. Submissions in either electronic or hard copy format, should be sent to the editor via the e-mail address given above or through the ANS at their postal address. Electronic text submissions should be formatted in Word with separate grayscale images.



### Editorial

Quite a lot has been going on in the Colonial numismatic world since April, especially for those interested in the Continental Currency in general and the coined "dollar" in particular. In the last issue we published the American Society's holdings of Continental Currency "dollars," but not long after, the 2014 volume of the *Numismatic Chronicle* (the annual publication of the Royal Numismatic Society) appeared. Included in its pages was a new and controversial article by Catherine Eagleton, entitled "Collecting America: Sarah Sophia Banks and the 'Continental Dollar' of 1776." On the basis of a remarkable old advertisement, Eagleton argued that the "dollars" were actually medals produced in Europe in imitation of the 1776 emission of paper Continental Currency notes.

Eagleton's view has—not too surprisingly—met with skepticism and criticism from Colonial numismatists on this side of the Atlantic. The issue was taken up by R. W. Julian in the June 25, 2015, edition of the *Numismatic News* (online at <http://www.numismaticnews.net/article/continental-dollar-struck-in-europe>) and by Joel Orosz and Mark Borckardt as part of the commentary to the online NGC Registry, *The Resolute Continental Currency Dollar Collection* (<https://coins.www.collectors-society.com/wcm/CoinCustomSetView.aspx?s=17828>). In this issue of *The Colonial Newsletter* we are pleased to publish a response to Eagleton's article written by David Fanning. David will be known to most readers as half of the

numismatic bookselling duo, Kolbe & Fanning, and from articles that have appeared in the *C4 Newsletter*. His response to Eagleton originally appeared as an online PDF (<http://www.numislit.com/pdfs/Continental%20Dollar.pdf>), but it seemed important to print it as part of the research record maintained by *CNL*.

This issue of *The Colonial Newsletter* also includes the publication of a new counterfeit halfpenny family by our resident counterfeit guru, Roger Moore. The new family is especially notable as it is based on coins related to a piece originally misidentified as a Blacksmith token (Wood 42) by Howland Wood in 1910. On the basis of better specimens, Wood 42 was subsequently reassessed as a variety of counterfeit halfpenny.

The final article, by Julia Casey, looks at the relationship between the Benjamin True dies used in the Canadian Blacksmith series and the die-sinker Edward Hulseman. This is her first *CNL* article, but she is well-known to many in the internet counterfeit collecting community.

Admittedly, the period covered (1830s–1840s) by her article is somewhat later than the period normally treated in the pages of *CNL*, but since there have been Blacksmith articles in the past (even before my time as editor!) there is good precedent for its inclusion. I realize that there has been a great deal of Blacksmith related material in *CNL* lately and that some

readers may be starting to grow suspicious of its Canadian-born editor, but the truth is that it has nothing to do with me at all. I just edit and print what readers send. No. Really. I mean it.

Please go ahead and believe what you will on this subject, but I do hope that you will enjoy the contributions to this issue of *The Colonial Newsletter*.

Oliver D. Hoover  
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**A Few Notes on Catherine Eagleton's  
*Numismatic Chronicle* Article on the Continental Dollar**

by  
**David F. Fanning; Gahanna, OH**

The 2014 volume of the *Numismatic Chronicle* includes Catherine Eagleton's article, "Collecting America: Sarah Sophia Banks and the 'Continental Dollar' of 1776." This is a highly interesting article that brings to light a wonderful printed advertisement seeming to offer examples of the 1776-dated Continental dollar to a European public and further discusses the impressive collecting efforts of Sarah Sophia Banks. However, while both Banks and the printed advertisement are well worth writing about, Eagleton introduces a few errors into her analysis that lead her to some faulty conclusions.

Eagleton's boldest claim in her article is the suggestion that the Continental dollars (Fig. 1) were struck in Europe and intended as medals.<sup>1</sup> It is clear from a handwritten catalogue entry made by Jonas Dryander and later copied by Banks that Dryander was of the opinion that the pieces were "never current, struck on speculation in Europe, for sale in America." Nowhere, however, does Dryander give any indication of why he thought this to be the case, and there is no real reason for us to accept this opinion as evidence of anything more than the existence of an opinion.

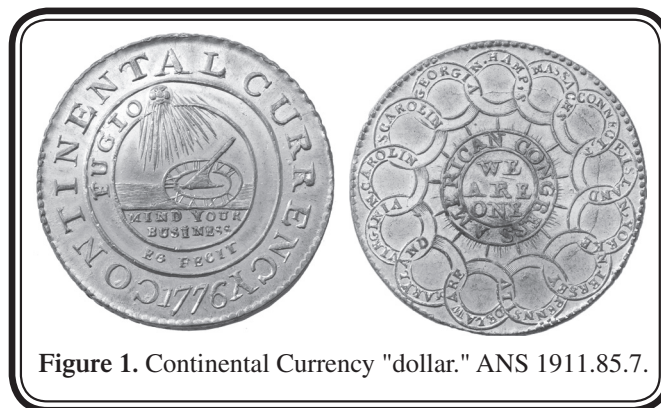


Figure 1. Continental Currency "dollar." ANS 1911.85.7.

It is the printed advertisement that is the most fascinating artifact discussed in Eagleton's article, but her analysis is faulty in a few ways. First, she assumes a connection between the manufacturer of the piece and the person behind the advertisement, despite no such connection being claimed in the ad itself. Second, she clings to the ad's use of the term "medal" (rather than "coin") to describe the piece while ignoring the fact that the words were used differently at the time. (For example, John Pinkerton's ubiquitous *Essay on Medals*, the main English collector's guide of the period, is almost entirely about coins.)

More serious objections to Eagleton's argument arise from two factual errors. First, she mistakenly states that the paper money design (Fig. 2) on which the Continental dollar dies were based is signed by E. G. (generally taken to be Elisha Gallaudet):

if this was meant to be a medal 'representing' the paper money, the presence on the Continental dollar of Gallaudet's design and initials might not indicate any direct connection between him and the cutting of its dies. ... It might equally be a case of the die-sinker copying the design from the paper money faithfully in all details, including its errors, and also reproducing the signature of the engraver responsible for the printing plates from which the paper money had been made. (page 298)

<sup>1</sup> I refer throughout to the piece as the "Continental dollar" while recognizing that this is simply the generally accepted term and not necessarily its true status.



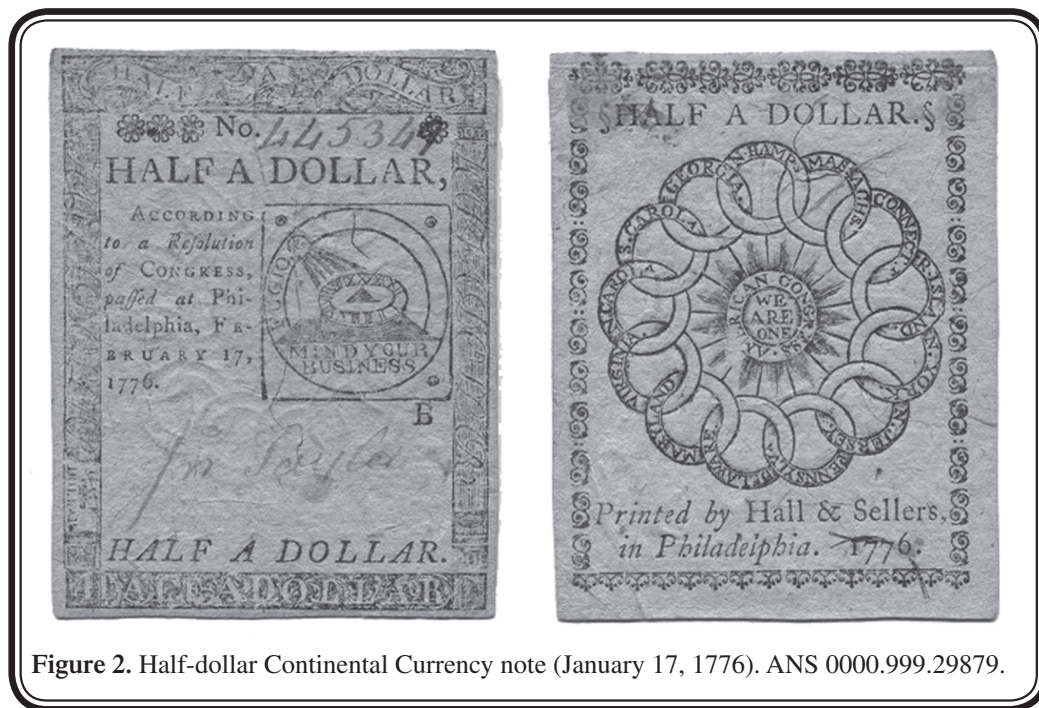


Figure 2. Half-dollar Continental Currency note (January 17, 1776). ANS 0000.999.29879.

In fact, only the metallic dollar is so signed: the paper money is not. This is a fairly serious lapse.

A second serious lapse comes in Eagleton's analysis of the printed advertisement. She clearly writes on page 298 that "the advertisement states that they were minted in Europe." It does no such thing. There is absolutely nothing said in the advertisement about where the pieces were made. Indeed, the ad describes them as "American Medals," which if anything implies that they were manufactured in America. The only source stating that the Continental dollars were struck in Europe is Banks (who was quoting Dryander), and this is evidence of nothing other than what they thought to be the case.

There are other quibbles one might have with the article, some of them based on the revelations contained in the July 2014 article by Eric P. Newman and Maureen Levine,<sup>2</sup> which found that the dollars had been illustrated as early as 1783 and alluded to in print as early as 1779. But Eagleton's errors regarding the E. G. signature and the printed advertisement are enough to call into question her conclusions. Indeed, "this example provides a caution against inferring too much from limited sources."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Eric P. Newman and Maureen Levine, "18th-Century Writings on the Continental Currency Dollar Coin," *The Numismatist* 127.7 (July 2014): 34–57. Given the lengthy lead-time of the *Numismatic Chronicle's* production, I acknowledge the probability that Eagleton had not seen the Newman and Levine article prior to submitting her article.

<sup>3</sup> Eagleton, page 300.

## **"Wood 42" Family of Counterfeit Halfpence**

by

**Roger A. Moore, MD; Philadelphia, PA**

### **Introduction**

In 1910, the first description of a series of tokens thought to have been crudely made by Canadian blacksmiths in the early 1800s was provided by Howland Wood.<sup>1</sup> He described the token numbered 42 in his catalogue as, uniface copper with a "HEAD OF GEORGE II TO LEFT. NO INSCRIPTION."

The status of this variety, now commonly known as Wood 42, as a true Blacksmith token was questioned by Warren Baker, who considered it to be a crude counterfeit halfpenny made in Britain. In fact, when Mr. Baker's collection of Blacksmith tokens was sold at auction,<sup>2</sup> his specimen was described as "While a legitimate example of Wood 42, this variety is not a blacksmith."

Of interest, his specimen had a reverse showing Britannia as the central device. Since the sale of the Baker collection, Gord Nichols has obtained a high grade-example of the Wood 42 token with a full reverse showing a 1771 retrograde date and provided support for Mr. Baker's assertion that the Wood 42 was not actually a Blacksmith token, but rather a British counterfeit that may have made it way to Canada.<sup>3</sup> Probably due to the low grade of the specimen, Wood incorrectly labeled his coin as a Blacksmith token. A number of related crude counterfeit halfpence began to surface with retrograde dates and dies shared with the original Wood 42. They became a favorite variety collected by Mike Ringo, who put together a plate of his coins that he considered to be "Wood 42 related."<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to explore the Family of counterfeit halfpence related to the original coin incorrectly identified as the Wood 42 Blacksmith token.

### **Nomenclature**

Following the standard convention, "Wood 42" Family obverses are identified by numbers and reverses by capital letters. Reworked dies are indicated by the addition of a lowercase letter to the primary obverse designation, as in the case of obverses 6a and 6b in Figures 1 and 2. The primary difference between these two obverse dies seems to be limited to the orientation of the third numeral in the ordinal number. The third digit was probably re-punched due to excessive die wear, thereby creating 6b. The 6b obverse seems to be more heavily worn and therefore a later die state. The lowercase letters allow the die states to be distinguished without resorting to a new number, which should properly indicate separate varieties. Similarly, the two reverses 71Da and 71Db (Figs. 1 and 2) are essentially the same except for the position of the letter R in the legend. Once again, the lowercase letter designations are added to the reverse letter D in order to distinguish between an early die state and a later state showing evidence of re-punched letters. The designation of re-punched/lapped dies by lowercase letters has been used previously.<sup>5</sup>

1 H. Wood, "The Canadian Blacksmith Coppers," *The Numismatist* 23 (April 1910).

2 "Warren Baker Collection of Canadian Blacksmith Coppers," in Bowers and Merana Auction (March 26–27, 1987).

3 G. Nichols, "Wood 42, Not A Blacksmith Copper," *C-4 Newsletter* 17.2 (Summer 2009): 20–21.

4 Personal papers of Mike Ringo archived in the C4 library.

5 R. Moore and J. Rock, "Rubber Lady: A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence," *The Colonial Newsletter* 149 (August 2012): 3910–3918.

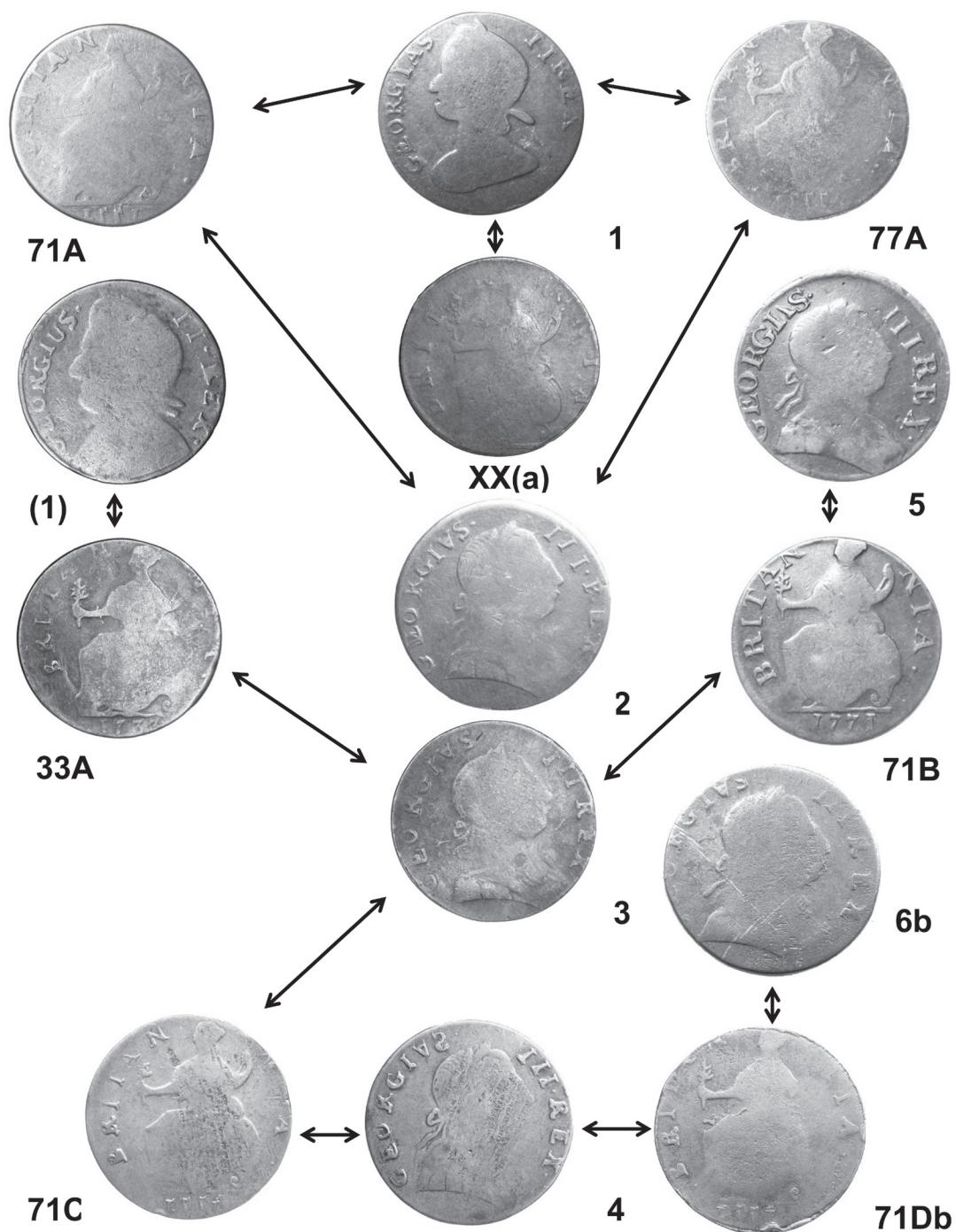


Figure 1. "Wood 42" Family with mules.

True Family member obverses or reverses paired with dies that do not belong to the Family stylistically are called "style mules" and could in essence be placed in two (or potentially more) Families based on the die's style attributes. The designation of a die that is not a true Family member within the Family plate (Figs. 1–2) is problematic as it is necessary to identify the die as related to the Family under study through die sharing, and the Family of counterfeit halfpence to which it belongs stylistically. At present, the accepted method for designating



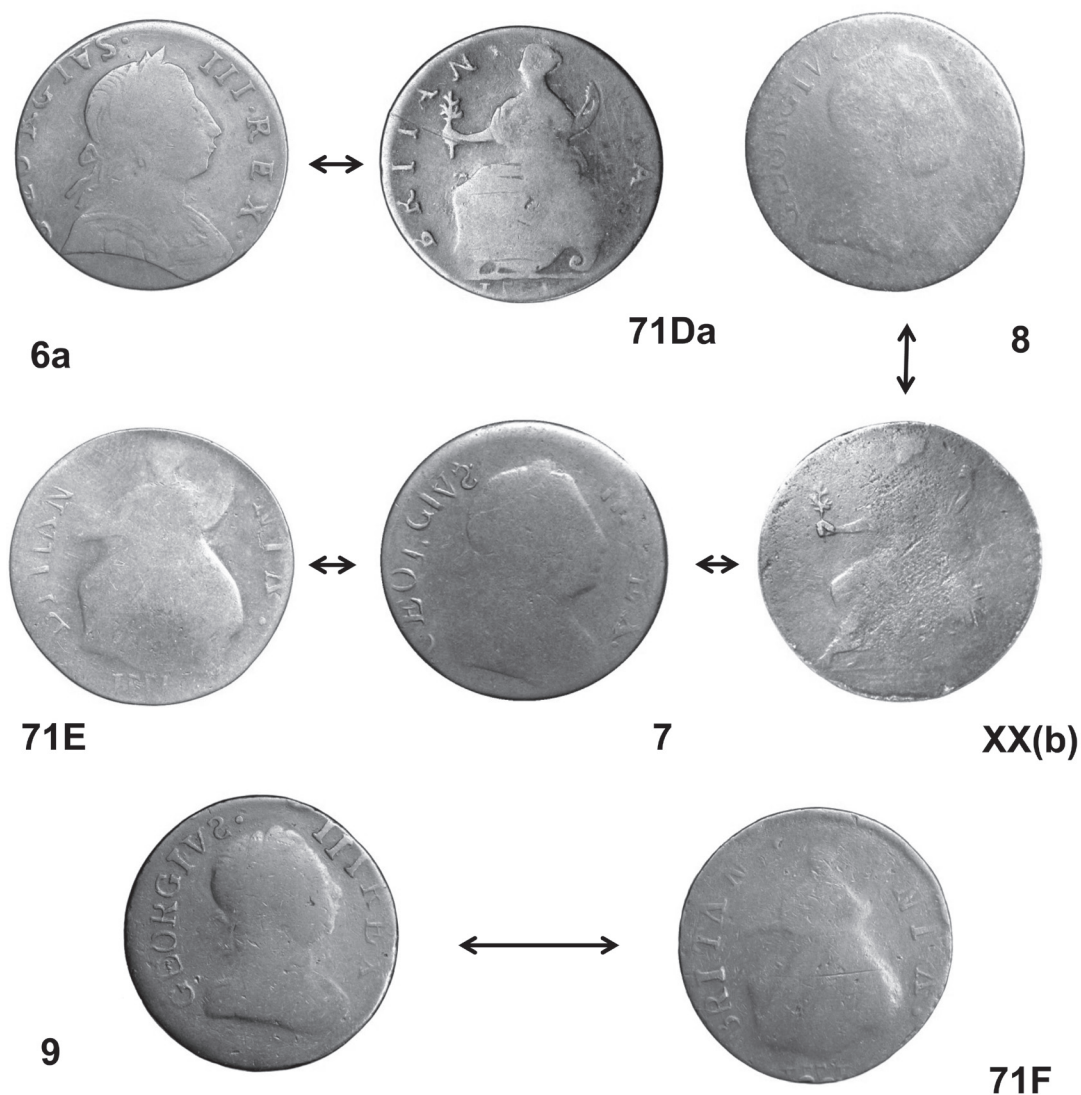


Figure 2. "Wood 42" Family with mules (continued).

obverse mules is to identify the mule with a number in parenthesis.<sup>6</sup> In the case of the one obverse mule die in the "Wood 42" Family, it is designated as (1) and the variety is designated as (1)-33A (Fig. 1). A reverse mule designation is indicated by the last two digits of the date on the coin and a lowercase letter designation in parenthesis. For the two reverse die "Wood 42" Family mules, the dates are not readable so they are given the designations XX(a) and XX(b). The XX element represents the presently unknown last two numbers of the date (Figs. 1–2). The one "Wood 42" Family obverse paired with the XX(a) mule is designated as 1-XX(a). The two obverses of the "Wood 42" Family that are paired with the reverse mule XX(b) are 7-XX(b) and 8-XX(b).

<sup>6</sup> This method was used in R. Moore, "Capped Head"; A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence, *The Colonial Newsletter* (April 2013), 3963-3981 and R. Moore and R. Bowser, "Ogle Eye: A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence," *The Colonial Newsletter* 152 (August 2014): 4107-4120.

## Characteristics of the "Wood 42" Family

**General:** At present the "Wood 42" Family consists of 18 different varieties, including mules and re-punched dies, with fairly extensive obverse and reverse die-sharing (Figs. 1–2). The 18 varieties were produced with 11 obverses and 11 reverses. Two of the obverses are head left and the remaining nine are head right. The original Wood 42 obverse is illustrated in Figure 1 as obverse 1. All the head right obverses have as their central device a young-looking portrait of King George III with pinched lips. Another characteristic running through many of the head right obverses is misspellings of the legend and die-punch errors such as a reversed letter S or an inverted letter A used to make the V in GEORGIVS. (Fig. 3, A). Additional legend errors on the obverses include a broken V (Fig. 3, A-c) and inverted Vs (Fig. 3, B). Other than the misspellings and the legend errors, the obverse legends seem to have all been made from the same punches except for obverse variety 5, which seems to have employed a larger set of letter punches.

The central devices used for all the reverses feature a similar squat Britannia and a distinctive treatment of the sprig (Fig. 3, C). The reverse legends all seem to have been made from the same punches except for reverse variety 71B, which seems to have involved a larger set of letter punches. A final characteristic feature is the punching of the date into the die backwards, producing retrograde numerals on over half of the reverses (Fig. 3, D).

One other notable feature of the "Wood 42" Family is how worn and poorly struck up the coins are. Full, complete, and well-centered die strikes are rare and on most coins significant details are missing. The best examples are shown in Figures 1 and 2, but still many of these examples leave much detail to the imagination.

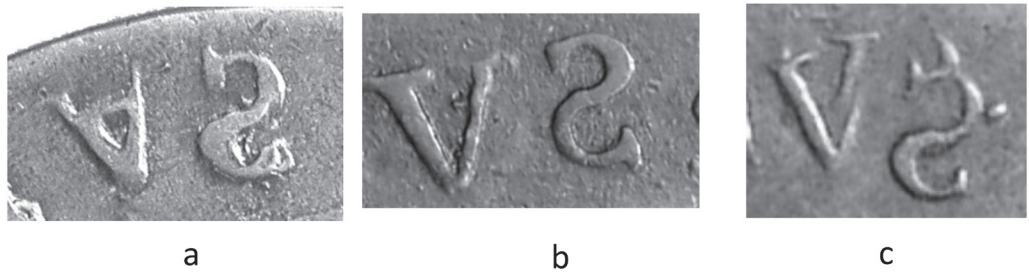
**Mules:** One of the varieties is a mule made from the coupling of a non-"Wood 42" Family obverse with a true "Wood 42" Family reverse: variety (1)-33A. The obverse mule features a head left die that looks like it may belong to the evasion series. However, this obverse has as yet been found paired with a different reverse, evasion or not.

Three other varieties were made by coupling two non-"Wood 42" Family reverses (XX-a and XX(b)) with true "Wood 42" Family obverses (1, 7, and 8) thereby producing three varieties (1-XX(a), 7-XX(b) and 8-XX(b)). The Family (s) in which the two reverse mules reside have not yet been defined and the dates on these reverses are not evident on any of the existing examples. The worn condition and lack of dates on these two mule reverses point to the possibility that they were end-of-life dies brought into service when other reverse dies were not available. In both the reverse mules the central Britannia device has a less squat appearance and a longer, thinner neck than in the typical true "Wood 42" Family reverse central devices.

## Obverses

### Left-Facing Heads

**Obverse 1:** This variety is the so-called Head of Household for the "Wood 42" Family and involves the obverse die that was mistaken for a Blacksmith token. The King George II central device is distinctive and cartoonish. The legend is of interest since it has a characteristic found in many of the head right varieties—a letter A punch was used to make the V in GEORGIVS. What is unusual in this case is that the A is not inverted to mimic the form of the expected V, but remains right side up. Because the central device is unlike any of the other true Family members, it could possibly be labeled a mule. However, historically this was the first variety identified as a "Wood 42" and the Family developed around the reverses, which share dies

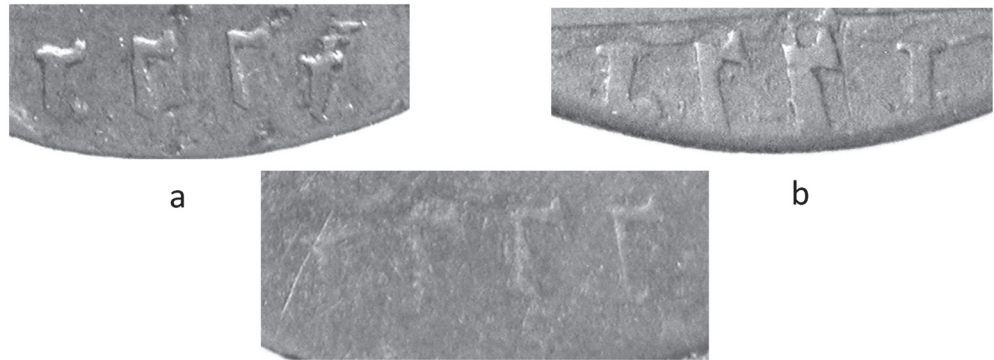


A – Close-up of up-side down letter A used to represent the letter V (a), backwards S (a, b, and c), and a double-punched V (c) in obverse legends.



B – Close-up of upside down letter V in obverse legends

C – Close-up of typical sprig on reverse



D – Close-up of typical retrograde 1771 date (a, b) and retrograde 1777 date (c) on reverses

**Figure 3.** Letter punch and sprig forms.

with this obverse and which in turn are paired with another obverse die with the characteristics of a true Family member. In addition, the legends were made from punches which stylistically correspond to the obverse varieties of the "Wood 42" Family with right-facing heads. For these reasons obverse 1 has not been identified as a mule here. Obverse 1 is paired with three reverses—71A, 77A, and XX(a) (Fig. 1).

**Obverse (1):** The King George II central device is stylistically like an evasion, although the legends are complete and without error. Notable is the use of the letter U for V in GEORGIVS. Because the central device is unlike any of the other true Family members and some of the letter-punches, such as the S, differ from true Family members, this obverse has been labeled a mule. This obverse is only paired with reverse 33A (Fig. 1).

### ***Right-Facing Heads***

**Obverse 2:** This variety features the characteristic youthful appearance of King George III with a slightly upturned nose and pinched lips. The legend has a re-punched letter E and an upside down letter A used to make the V in GEORGIVS (Fig. 1). A diagnostic feature that can be used to identify this obverse is the low first unit of the ordinal number and the wide spacing between the second and third unit. This obverse is paired with two reverses—71A and 77A (Fig. 1).

**Obverse 3:** This variety involves the same stylistic features noted for Obverse 2 except for the re-punched E. Obverse 3 is paired with three reverses—33A, 71B and 71C (Fig. 1).

**Obverse 4:** This variety involves the same stylistic features noted for Obverse 3. The letter S in GEORGIVS is reversed also. Obverse 4 is paired with two reverses—71C and 71Db (Fig. 1).

**Obverse 5:** This variety employs the characteristic youthful portrait of King George III, but is differentiated from the other varieties by the large, well-made lettering in the legend (Fig. 1). A diagnostic feature is the inverted V in GEORGIVS. (Fig. 3, B-a) This obverse is paired with a single reverse—71B, which also features large lettering.

**Obverse 6a:** This variety has the same features as obverse 5, but it can be distinguished by the low placement of the first two numerals of the ordinal number in relation to the last numeral (Fig. 2). This obverse is paired only with the reverse 71Da.

**Obverse 6b:** The only difference between this obverse and obverse 6a is the third unit in the ordinal seems to be angled away from the base of the second unit. It is evident that both 6a and 6b were made from the same die and that the difference can be accounted for by the re-punching of the third unit after the die had become worn. Obverse 6b is identified as the re-punched die based on the increased spalling (die breakdown) compared to 6a, indicating that the 6b obverse was made later in the life of the die. This obverse is paired with reverse 71Db (Fig. 1).

**Obverse 7:** The characteristic youthful portrait of King George III seems indistinct due to a poorly sunk die (Fig. 2) The legend typical GEORGIVS . III . REX . legend is present, but the right arm of the letter V is broken and the S is reversed with a small stop located at its top right. (Fig. 3, A-c). One should also note the washed out letter R in the legend. This obverse is paired with two reverses—71E and the mule XX(b).

**Obverse 8:** As on obverse 7, the youthful royal portrait seems indistinct due to a poorly sunk die or poor condition of the single known existing example (Fig. 2). Only the GEORGIVS element of the legend is clear due to the poor condition of the obverse, but its use of a backwards S is sufficient to distinguish it from the other known obverse varieties. The position and slope of the letters I and V, as well as the backward letter S are key diagnostic features. This obverse is only paired with one reverse—the mule XX(b), but the reverse is so poorly struck that absolute determination of that reverse designation is questionable. The author decided to make the connection on the plate due some corresponding details, but if better specimens become available, this relationship may change.



**Obverse 9:** Similar to obverse 7 with a characteristic youthful King George III, but the portrait is indistinct due to a poorly sunk die. The letter S is reversed with a large stop located to the mid-right portion of the letter (Fig. 2). This obverse is paired only with 71F.

### Reverses

**Reverse 33A:** The only 1733-dated reverse has a fairly normal looking Britannia like most of the other "Wood 42" reverses and a very characteristic sparse sprig (Fig. 1). The legend on this reverse, like on most of the "Wood 42" reverses, contains letters that are small, misshapen, and stubby. Other than the date, a primary diagnostic feature for identifying this variety is the position of Britannia's right arm and the sprig in relationship to the legend (Fig. 1). This reverse is paired with two obverses—the mule obverse (1) and obverse 3.

**Reverse 71A:** This 1771-dated reverse has a characteristic that is found on most of the "Wood 42" reverses—a retrograde date (Fig. 1). None of the digits in the date are re-punched. A diagnostic feature of this variety is the position of the digits in the date in relation to each other and to the exergue line. This reverse is paired with two obverses—obverse 1 and obverse 2.

**Reverse 71B:** This reverse is the only 1771-dated reverse with a normally oriented date. It also differs from the other "Wood 42" varieties in having had the legends punched with large letters. The treatment of Britannia and the sprig, however, are consistent with the other "Wood 42" reverses (Fig. 1). This reverse is paired with obverse 3 and obverse 5, the latter of which also features large lettering in the legends.

**Reverse 71C:** This reverse is more typical of the Family with a stubby Britannia and sparse sprig, small, crude legend lettering, and a retrograde date all present (Fig. 1). One diagnostic feature is the triple-punched last digit of the date. The multiple-punching may be evident only in high grade specimens. Otherwise the relationship of Britannia's left arm and sprig to the legend must be used to identify the variety. This reverse comes paired with two obverses—obverse 3 and obverse 4.

**Reverse 71Da:** This is a typical reverse, featuring a stubby Britannia with sparse sprig, small, crude legend lettering, and a retrograde date (Fig. 2). Identifying the variety requires comparison of the position of Britannia's left arm and sprig to the legend. Another diagnostic feature is a die defect in Britannia's lap. This reverse is thought to represent an early die state. It was later re-punched to produce the subtly different 71Db. Reverse 71Da is only paired with obverse 6a.

**Reverse 71Db:** Due the extreme similarity of this reverse to 71Da, it was not given its own letter designation, but rather a sub-designation of the 71D die. One diagnostic feature, if present, is the double punched first and last digits in the date. The secondary punching of the digits probably occurred when the die was reworked. Also diagnostic is the spacing between the R and I in BRITANNIA, which differs slightly from reverse 71Da. Finally the defect in Britannia's lap is slightly larger than found in 71Da. This reverse comes paired with two obverses—obverse 4 and 6b.

**Reverse 71E:** This reverse has a lightly struck, but typical, stubby Britannia and retrograde date, although the legend lettering is thinner and more willowy than usual (Fig. 2). A diagnostic feature for this variety is the two As in BRITANNIA made from inverted letter V punches. No cross-bars have been added to make them into proper As. This reverse only comes paired with obverse 7.

**Reverse 71F:** This reverse is similar to 71E, featuring a stubby, poorly struck Britannia, retrograde date, and an upside down letter V punch used to make the As in BRITANNIA (Fig. 2). The only way to distinguish this reverse from reverse 71E is to note the differences in letter-spacing in the legends. This reverse comes paired only with obverse 9.

**Reverse XX(a):** The reverse XX(a) is considered a mule due to the very different appearance of Britannia compared to the normal "Wood 42" reverse. Britannia is not stubby but rather has a long thin neck and small head (Fig. 1). Unfortunately, the die used to make this reverse had seen a lot of wear and spalling almost entirely obscures the sprig and other portions of the die. In addition, none of the surviving specimens have a discernible date, which would imply that this die was brought into use near the end of its life. The primary Family that this reverse belongs in has not been established. This reverse is paired only with obverse 1.

**Reverse XX(b):** This reverse is not related to the "Wood 42" Family other than through muling with two "Wood 42" obverse dies. Similar to XX(a), Britannia is not stylistically similar to the "Wood 42" Family member reverses and unfortunately none of the known surviving examples show a date (Fig. 2). In addition, the die used to make this reverse was so worn it has not been definitely determined to which Family this reverse belongs. The sprig and leg arm of Britannia are distinctive and the shield design is also diagnostic for these low-grade examples. This reverse is paired with two obverses—obverse 7 and 8. The identification of obverse 8 remains questionable as it is known from only a single, low-grade example.

### Die States and Emission Sequence

An analysis of die states can provide insight into which varieties were minted first or later. Die state determinations can be more problematic in poorly struck and low grade coins, as are found in the "Wood 42" Family, but a substantial amount of information is still available. In Figures 4 and 5, a number of die states are shown for different obverses and reverses.

**Obverse 2:** This obverse is paired with reverse 71A and 77A. The early die state obverse (Fig. 4, A-a) is paired only with reverse 77A and the late die state (Fig. 4, A-b) is paired only with 71A. Note that the late die state has a die break extending from the chin midway to the rim and from the top of the ribbon out to the letter R in GEORGIVS. Therefore, variety 2-77A was minted prior to 2-71A, indicating the dating of the varieties was not related to the minting sequence.

2-77A → 2-71A

**Obverse 3:** There are three die states of obverse 3 (Fig. 4. B-a, b, and c). The early die state, (B-a), is found on a single coin representing variety 3-71C. The middle die state (B-b) shows some breakdown of the die in the field in front of King George's chin as well in the ribbons at the back of his head. The middle die state is also represented by a single coin representing variety 3-33A. The late die state (B-c) features more extensive damage to the die in front of King George's chin and within the ribbons. The late die state occurs only in variety 3-71B. Therefore, the minting sequence based on these observations was variety 3-71C first, variety 3-33A second, and variety 3-71B third. Once again the dates on the coins do not correspond to the minting sequence.

3-71C → 3-33A → 3-71B

**Obverses 6a and 6b:** As mentioned previously, obverses 6a and 6b are thought to have been made from the same die which was partially re-punched at some point. One can compare the 6a and 6b dies in Figure 4 (C-a and C-c). Notable is the early and late die state of 6a (Fig. 4, C-a



a

b

A. Early (a) and Late (b) die states of obverse 2 – note in (b) the die break on chin and back of head



a

b

c

B. Early (a), Mid (b), and Late (c) die states of obverse 3 – note in (b) the beginning of die breakdown in front of King George's face and around ribbons which become more extensive in (c).



a

b

c

C. Early (a) and Late (b) die states of obverse 6a and obverse 6b (c) which is made from the slightly modified 6a die– note in (b) the die erosion in front of face, neck and chest. Similar erosion is seen in (c).



a

b

D. Early (a) and Late (b) die states of obverse 9 – note in (b) the erosion of facial details

Figure 4. Obverse die states.

and C-b). The early die state has no apparent spalling while the late die state has fairly extensive spalling in front of King George's chin, neck, and chest. Both the early and late die states of 6a only come paired with 71Da reverses. The 71Da reverses were of course made before the reverse die was re-punched. Interestingly, the 6b obverse, which is represented by

a single coin, is paired with the re-punched 71D reverse: 71Db. There also seems to be less spalling in the in front of King George's chin and chest compared to the late die state 6a, which would indicate that when the die was re-punched, it was also lapped to remove some of the deterioration.

6a-71Da → 6b-71Db

**Obverse 9:** Although obverse 9 comes only with a single reverse—71F—this obverse is found in two die states (Fig. 4, D-a and D-b). In the early die state, there are clean edges to the legends and central device, while in the late die state, portrait details, including the entire face, are eroded, as are the legends. One might consider the appearance of a late die state to be caused by wear to the coin if not for the fact that the same deteriorated condition is seen on a number of examples. Only the deterioration of the die can explain this.

**Reverse 33A:** As shown in Figure 5 (A-a and A-b), two die states of reverse 33A are evident. In the early die state, no abnormality is present in the field in front of Britannia's leg while in the late die state a depression is seen running between the top of Britannia's foot to the bottom of the letter B in the legend. Whether this depression is due to a die break or clashing is not clear. In any case, only the early die state is found paired with the mule obverse: (1). In addition, a single coin pairs obverse 3 with an early die state reverse. The single late die state example is also paired with obverse 3. Therefore, the early die state reverse 33A was used to mint all (1)-33A and some 3-33A varieties. The single late die state example of the 33A reverse is paired with a 3 obverse, indirectly indicating that 3-33A was minted after the (1)-33A variety.

(1)-33A → (1)-33A and 3-33A → 3-33A

**Reverse 71B:** The 71B reverse comes in both an early die state with no die damage apparent and in a late die state where die deterioration can be seen particularly under and between the letters N and I in the legend, as well as some spalling around Britannia's right arm. The reverse 71B is paired with the two obverses 3 and 5. Both early and late die state 71B reverses are found paired with obverse 3. In every case when the late die state reverse is paired with a 3 obverse, the obverse is also in a late die state. Similarly in every case when the early reverse die state is paired with the 3 obverse, the 3 obverse is in its early die state. This is not unexpected if the two dies were used together and wore down at a similar rate. When paired with obverse 5, both early and late die states of 71 B are found. The 5 obverse is known only in a single die state, making further evaluation impossible. However, since the reverse 71B was used with both obverse 3 and 5 in both early and late die states, we can conclude that these two varieties were minted together over the life of the dies.

3 (EDS)-71B (EDS) and 5-71B (EDS) → 3 (LDS)-71B (LDS) and 5-71B (LDS)

**Reverse 71C:** The early and late die states of reverse 71C are distinguished primarily by the spalling which occurs over Britannia's right arm and the shield in the late die state. (Fig. 5, C-a and C-b) The early die states are found paired with obverse 4 while the single late die state reverse is paired with obverse 3.

4-71C → 3-71C





a



b

A. Early (a) and Late (b) die states of reverse 33A – note in (b) the die break or clashing between Britannia's foot and the letter "B" in the legend



a



b

B. Early (a) and Late (b) die states of reverse 71B – note in (b) the die break between and under the legend letters "N" and "I"



a



b

C. Early (a) and Late (b) die states of reverse 71C – note in (b) the die erosion between Britannia's shoulder and the sprig as well as above the shield

Figure 5. Reverse die states.

### Emission Sequence

Since die states are not known for all the obverses and reverses, forming a picture of where all the varieties of "Wood 42" fit into the minting process is not possible. However, based on the existing evidence, as outlined above, some conclusions can be reached. It would seem

therefore that the evasion style obverse mule was pulled into service after the minting process was already underway. It is also evident that the 1733 dated coins had little relationship in regard to minting sequence with the actual date since 1771 dated coins were minted first. The lack of a date relationship also holds true for the 1777 dated coins with obverse 2 which were minted before the 1771 dated coins with obverse 2. As more die states are discovered, the entire sequence of minting will be more firmly established. The emission sequences are summarized below:

$$2-77A \rightarrow 2-71A$$
$$4-71C \rightarrow 3-71C \rightarrow (1)-33A \rightarrow 3-33A \rightarrow 3-71B \text{ and } 5-71B$$

### **Metrology**

The 18 varieties of the "Wood 42" Family, including re-punched dies and mules, were made from 11 obverse dies and 11 reverse dies. Sixty-seven coins were studied for inclusion in the Family and which serve as the basis for the present description. The specific varieties are listed in Table 1, which includes the number of coins in each variety in order to provide a relative rarity rating. Compared to Regal coinage, the coins in the "Wood 42" Family are all significantly underweight with an average weight of 86.5 grains (range of 72.7–109.3 grains) and an average diameter of 27.2 mm (range of 23.3–28.5 mm). As mentioned above, this Family often comes in a condition which makes it difficult to attribute due to poorly sunk dies and uneven strikes. In addition, minting errors are common. Twelve of the sixty-seven coins were struck off center, three were double struck, two have clipped planchets, and one is a brockage. Comparative analysis of the different varieties in the Family did not produce any surprises, although it is very important that of the nine reverses with readable dates, seven of them had the date punched into the die in a retrograde fashion.

### **Conclusions**

The "Wood 42" Family of counterfeit halfpence consists of 18 varieties, including style mules and re-engraved die subtypes. The Family is particularly fascinating since the coin which gave this Family its name was initially described as a Wood 42 Blacksmith token. One of the attractions of this Family to counterfeit halfpence collectors is the abundant die-sinking errors in the legends, the retrograde dates, and mistakes in the minting process. The frequent errors indicate that a fairly unsophisticated counterfeiting operation minted these coins. The weights and diameters of even the heaviest and largest coins in this Family fall far below the required standard for Regal halfpence and most of the coins are significantly below the weight seen for counterfeit halfpence. Although only 67 coins were examined for this paper, it is expected that many others exist in collections with their true identities unrecognized. If readers do find "Wood 42" Family members in their collections, please send photos and data to the author at rogermoore435@yahoo.com.

### **Acknowledgements**

Images and information were shared by members of the internet-based Yahoo Non-Regal Research group. Contributors of images and data on their coins include Eugene Andrews, Bob Bowser, Dan Burleson, Paul Cartmill, Ed Foster, Steve Frank, Julia Purdy, Clem Schettino, Gord Nichols, Jeff Rock, and Rickie Rose. Contributors of images included Mike Ringo (from previous active participation), Ed Foster (prior to his unfortunate and untimely death), David Palmer, Mark Varney, and Chris Young. The superb editing of Oliver Hoover must also be acknowledged.

Table 1: "Wood 42" Family Metrology

Variety	Number of specimens	Average Axis	Axis*	Average Weight (grains)	Weight Range (grains)	Weight* (grains)	Average Diameter	Diameter Range (mm)	Diameter* (mm)	Date	Comments
(1)-33A	5	Coin turn	3:5	81.4	75.2–88.5	3:5	26	23.3–27.4	3:5	Normal	1 off center
1-71A	2	Coin turn	2:2	84.1	81.8–86.4	2:2	27	26.9–27	2:2	Retrograde	1 off center
1-77A	1	Coin turn	1:1	76		1:1	26.5		1:1	Retrograde	
1-XX(a)	7	Coin turn	2:7	85.9	78.1–97.9	3:7	27.3	27.2–27.4	2:7	?	3 off center; one clipped
2-71A	2	Coin turn	2:2	91.6	89.1–94.1	2:2	27	26.9–27	2:2	Retrograde	
2-77A	5	Coin turn	3:5	79	75–85.5	3:5	27.7	27.6–28	3:5	Retrograde	
3-33A	1	Coin turn	1:1	85.8		1:1	27.4		1:1	Normal	
3-71B	3	Coin turn	2:3	79	78–79.9	2:3	27.4	27.3–27.5	2:3	Normal	2 off center
3-71C	1	Coin turn	1:1	92.2		1:1	27.1		1:1	Retrograde	
4-71C	8	Coin turn	5:8	85.5	72.7–95.2	5:8	27.4	27.3–27.6	5:8	Retrograde	1 off center
5-71B	4	Coin turn	2:4	95.5	89.8–101.1	2:4	27.6	27–28.1	2:4	Normal	1 off center
6a-71Da	9	Coin turn	6:9	98.9	91–109.3	7:9	27.1	26.4–27.8	7:9	Normal	1 clipped; one brockage
6b-71Db	1	Coin turn	1:1	85.8		1:1	27.1		1:1		
7-71E	2	Coin turn	1:2	81.4		1:2	28.3		1:2	Retrograde	1 double struck
7-XX(b)	7	Coin turn	3:7	77.4	75.8–80	3:7	27.4	26.8–27.8	3:7	?	1 double struck; 1 off center
8-XX(b)	1	Coin turn	1:1	73.3		1:1	27.4		1:1	?	
9-71F	7	Coin turn	4:7	86	79.9–90.3	4:7	27.6	26.9–28.5	4:7	Retrograde	2 double struck; 1 off center
Total	67	Coin turn		86.5	72.7–109.3		27.2	23.3–28.5			12 off center; 3 double struck

\*Number of coins measured:total number of specimens.

**Hulseman, the Counterfeiter:  
The Dies of Benjamin True in the Canadian Blacksmith Token Series  
by  
Julia H. Casey; Ballston Spa, NY**

The Canadian Blacksmith tokens die linked to the American Hard Times Tokens of Benjamin True are one of the great numismatic mysteries. Listed in Charlton's *Canadian Colonial Tokens* as BL-40 to BL-48 (Wood 23 to Wood 30) they are a fascinating mixture to study. The die progression and muling is as intriguing as it is bewildering.

I began my research of these coins at the source, with an attempt to create a biography of Benjamin Cummings True (b. June 8, 1808, in Goshen, New Hampshire, d. February 1, 1908, in Maysville, Indiana). This biography was to be the bulk of my paper on the subject. However, in the course of my research I wandered into another intersecting sphere and have therefore modified my focus.

Other attempts to discover biographical details of the long life of Benjamin True have been made. Lyman Low provided a paragraph in his list of Hard Times Tokens in 1899.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately Mr. Low erroneously placed Benjamin True and his younger brother Daniel (b. 1813) in the City of Troy. This error has been corrected by Alfred Z. Reed,<sup>2</sup> but is still largely promulgated.

I have gathered many new details about the life of Benjamin True. I was assisted by a lengthy obituary printed on the front page of The Fort Wayne Sentinel (February 1, 1908) and other contemporary newspaper articles and sources. I hope to publish another paper at a later date that details further his years in Albany and Cincinnati. This would include comments on his business partner and friend, Charles Francis Hall, the famed Arctic explorer who named a far northern whaling outpost—Cape True—in his honor.<sup>3</sup>

However, this present article will explore related events that led me to possible explanations as to how the Canadian Blacksmith Coppers of the “True Dies” may have come about.

### **The Rising Sun Tavern**

The first token I would like to discuss is BL-41 (Wood 24) with the rare RISEING SUN TAVERN reverse (Fig. 1). The reverse die for this token has generally been thought to be Canadian in origin.<sup>4</sup> In my research however, I discovered that Albany also had a Rising Sun Tavern. The building was previously known as “Crosby’s Hotel” but went by the name of the Rising Sun Tavern from about 1833-1835 when it burned to the ground.

The building is described as an “Old yellow brick tavern.....A well known resort. It was a queer building in architecture. It contained a large room, called the long room, suitable for large gatherings, where military companies and civic societies were frequently entertained” (Personal

<sup>1</sup> *American Journal of Numismatics* 33 (April 1899): 118–122.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Z. Reed, “The Trues, Die Cutters In Albany and Cincinnati,” *The Numismatist* 54 (December 1941): 31 (reprinted in David E. Schenkman, ed., *A Survey of American Trade Tokens* [Lawrence, MA, 1968]).

<sup>3</sup> Chauncey Loomis, *Weird and Tragic Shores, The Story of Charles Francis Hall, Explorer* (New York, 1971): 99–104.

<sup>4</sup> *Mehl’s Numismatic Monthly* VIII.1 (January 1917): 1–2; J. D. Ferguson, “‘Sun Tavern’ Canadian Blacksmith Token,” *Ontario Numismatist* 43 (July/August 2004): 71 (reprinted from the *Transactions of the Canadian Numismatic Society* [April 1966]).





Figure 1. BL-41, Wood 24. Photograph courtesy of Jeff Rock.

Recollections of the Drama, Henry Dickinson Stone, Albany, N.Y 1873 & Bi-Centennial History of Albany, George Rogers Howell, Jonathan Tenney, 1886)

The *Albany Evening Journal* of that era contains notices of meetings of “Whig Electors” of the city wards taking place at the Rising Sun Tavern (Fig. 2). Benjamin True was an active member of the Whig Party in Albany.

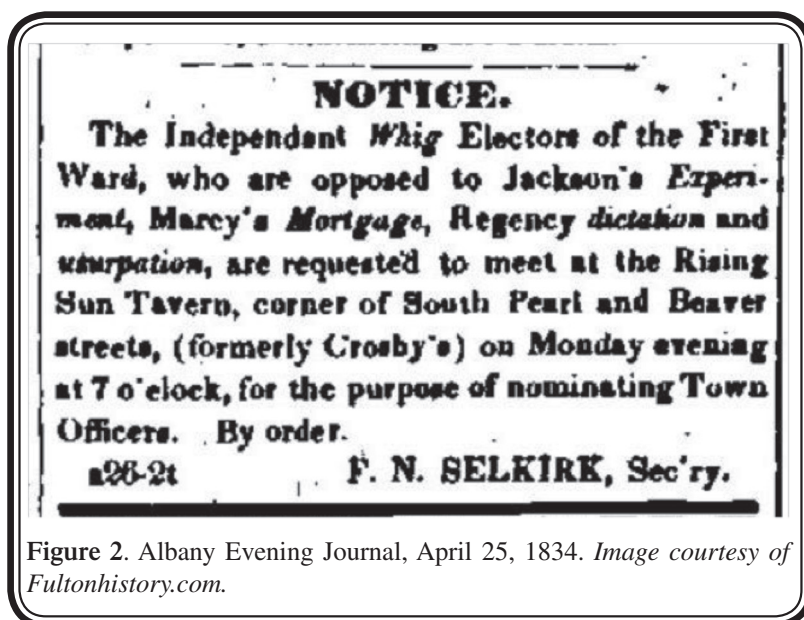


Figure 2. Albany Evening Journal, April 25, 1834. Image courtesy of Fultonhistory.com.

Also of note is the location of the Rising Sun Tavern at the corner of South Pearl and Beaver Streets (19 South Pearl Street) while Benjamin True's place of business, per the city directories, was located at that time on Beaver Street.

In addition to his younger brother Daniel, Benjamin True had an older brother named Stephen Bartlett True (b. 1800). The 1829 Albany City directory lists an Alonzo Stewart and S. B. True setting up an establishment at 21 South Pearl Street—right next door to the Rising Sun Tavern building. Stephen True is listed in prior years as the proprietor of a “porter and oyster cellar.”

This information makes a case for Benjamin True as the die-sinker probably responsible for the Rising Sun Tavern die and Albany as the location of the tavern. However, I have not been able to match the die punches to any of True's work so while I offer this as a consideration for future research it is now quite inconclusive.

From hereon I will discuss my research on the possible movement of the American Hard Times Token coins and dies across the border into Canada.

### Edward Hulseman

The engraver and die-sinker Edward Hulseman is an important figure in American numismatics. He is credited with engraving many pieces in the Hard Times Tokens series but his background is somewhat sketchy and mysterious.<sup>5</sup> I first came across Hulseman in the following article reported in the *New Hampshire Patriot* on January 15, 1838 (Fig. 3):

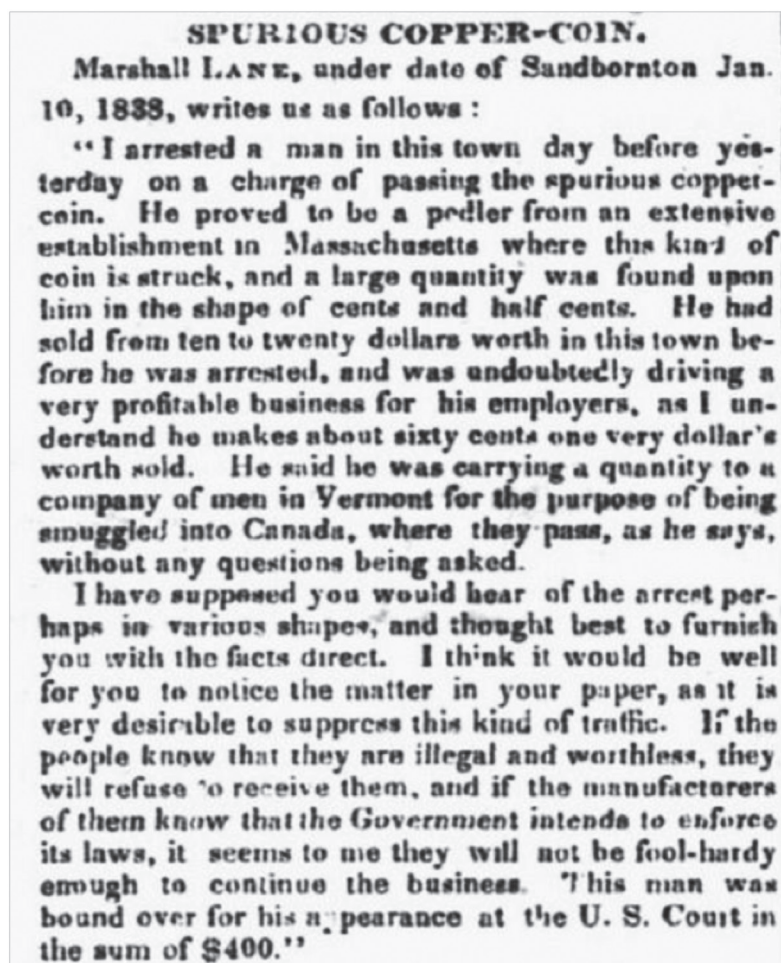
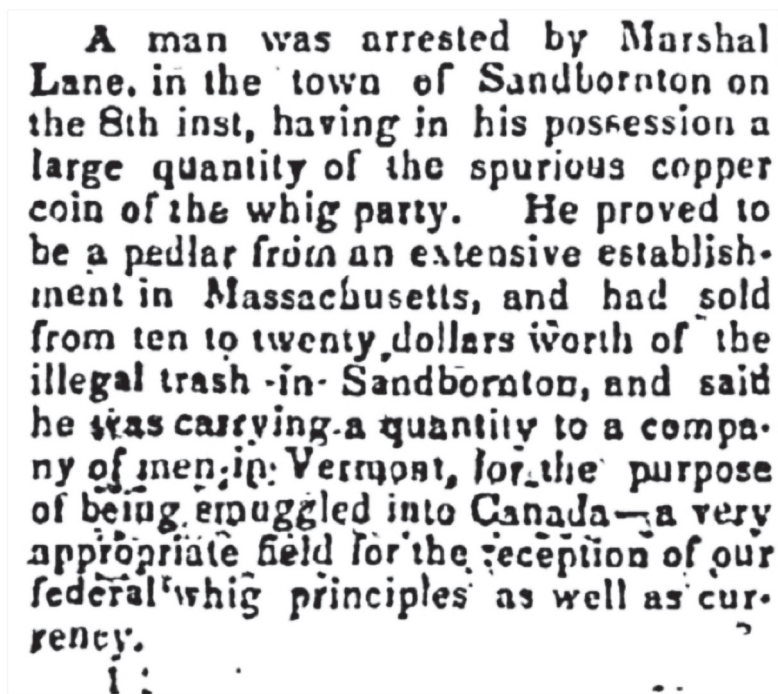


Figure 3. Image courtesy of Genealogybank.com.

5 Robert J. Lindesmith, "Edward Hulseman: Hard Times Token Engraver," *TAMS Journal* 152 (June–July 1967): 71–82.

This same event was reported in a slightly different form in the *Gloucester Democrat* on January 19, 1838 (Fig. 4):



A man was arrested by Marshal Lane, in the town of Sandbornton on the 8th inst, having in his possession a large quantity of the spurious copper coin of the whig party. He proved to be a pedlar from an extensive establishment in Massachusetts, and had sold from ten to twenty dollars worth of the illegal trash in Sandbornton, and said he was carrying a quantity to a company of men in Vermont, for the purpose of being smuggled into Canada—a very appropriate field for the reception of our federal whig principles as well as currency.

Figure 4. Image courtesy of Genealogybank.com.

The “cents and half cents” indicated in these articles led me to research the “half cents” of the Hard Times Tokens series. The lone half cent type listed by Rulau (HT73) is attributed to Edward Hulseman who is thought to have worked out of Attleboro, MA, and established himself in New York City.<sup>6</sup>

Further research into Mr. Hulseman has resulted in a potential breakthrough in solving the Canadian Blacksmith Tokens and American Hard Times Tokens mishmash.

The above articles provide a tantalizing clue as to one route for these pieces. There was apparently a known and established smuggling network through Vermont into Canada for American-made tokens. I am not aware of large numbers of any particular type of Hard Times Token circulating in Canada but this may be a topic for further study.

Another possibility is that the tokens entered Canada through the agency of Mr. Hulseman himself.

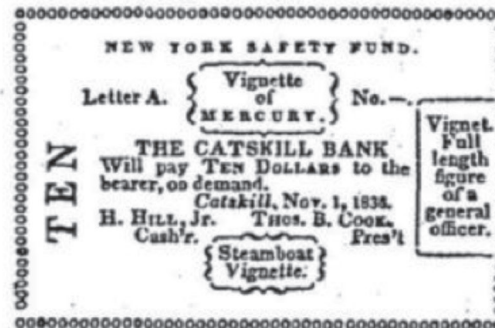
In July and August of 1840, the New York City newspapers published a series of articles connecting Edward Hulseman to a bank note counterfeiting scheme.

This article is from *New York Morning Herald* July 27 1840 (Fig. 5):

<sup>6</sup> Russell Rulau, *Hard Times Tokens*, 6th ed. (Iola, WI, 1996): 42.



**PROGRESS OF THE MORALITY OF THE AGE—DARING FORGERY, AND ESCAPE OF THE FORGER—MORE RUNNING AWAY.**—Almost every one in this city knew Hulseman, the celebrated bank note engraver in Nassau street. Well, he has engraved his last plate in this city and sloped. He has engraved a sort of semi-counterfeit \$10 plate of the Catskill Bank, of which the following is a copy:



What renders this counterfeit extremely puzzling is, the fact that the dyes of all the vignettes, five in number, were taken from the same bed plates; from which the genuine bills were printed. These bed plates came into Hulseman's possession, it appears, in the way of trade; and the only counterfeit, therefore, is in the lettering, which is extremely well done. The signatures are very faithful copies, being first etched in the plate and then inked over afterwards. So true are they, that Mr. Cook, the president, found it difficult to tell his own signature from the counterfeit. The bills may be known by the coarseness of the paper used, and by one other curious fact, which is this: Mr. Cook happened to sign a few of the \$10 bills with a steel pen; this made his writing appear finer and more scratchy than usual, and as we think, a little more trembling. It so happened that Hulseman copied one of the signatures signed with a steel pen. With these exceptions, the counterfeit is perfect.

Edward Hulseman, who engraved the counterfeit, has run away, and those who catch him will do the State some service. He was convicted with Tozer in engraving notes of the "Jefferson Banking Company of Vermont," and in one or two other curious tricks. He is, by birth, a Frenchman, 35 years old; about five feet 6 or 7 inches, thick set, dark complexion, dark hair, speaks good English, with a French accent, and takes snuff constantly.—He has a disagreeable and forbidding aspect, and his looks would "hang him at Tyburn," as they used to say, in the days of Jonathan Wild. There is a curious history connected with this affair, which we will give in full hereafter. The community are indebted to Oliver M. Lownds, Esq. for nipping this counterfeiting in the bud.

Figure 5. Image courtesy of Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers, Galegroup.com.



And from *The Evening Post* July 29, 1840 (Fig. 6):

**IMPORTANT DEVELOPEMENT.**—Within the last few days, much interest has been excited in certain circles in this city, by discoveries of extensive facilities for counterfeiting, and of actual counterfeiting, of a most perfect character. It appears that a foreigner, an engraver of ordinary attainments in his art, by the name of Hulseman, who for a few years has been engaged in engraving in this city, and more recently in executing "shin plasters," was suspected of being concerned in counterfeiting bank notes. Unfortunately for the public, he had come into possession of a large quantity of dies and apparatus formerly used by Messrs. Burton, Edmunds & Co., a respectable bank note engraving company, whose effects a few years since went into the hands of assignees and were sold.

Ten dollar notes of the Catskill Bank had been discovered, of a suspicious character, which could but with difficulty be ascertained to be forgeries, having been printed from the original dies formerly used for the Catskill \$10's.

It is said that last week, early one morning, a person was discovered at Hoboken burying something, which was found afterwards to be a package of counterfeit \$10 notes, to a large amount, on the Catskill Bank. From suspicions of Hulseman, connected with the circumstances, steps were entered upon for his apprehension, but he was missing. Nothing has been heard of him since, but there is reason to believe he has gone to Canada.

Search was made for the materials of his establishment. It was ascertained, through a carman, where they had been removed to, and subsequently to another place, where they were found, in an upper loft, in the possession of a tradesman, a foreigner, who at first denied any knowledge of the transaction and of Hulseman, but stated that the boxes which were deposited with him, were hardware from Europe. He subsequently said that they were going to Canada, but refused to open either of them. A writ was obtained for him, and he finally consented to open one of the boxes, which contained some of the apparatus, and which was recognised by Mr. Burton at once.

We are told that the person, and the various boxes, with tools and dies, were taken into custody; and here the matter rests in the hands of the proper authorities.—*Jour. Com.*

Figure 6. Image courtesy of Newspapers.com.

Intriguingly Hulseman did escape into Canada, as reported in *The Evening Post* on August 25, 1840 (Fig. 7):

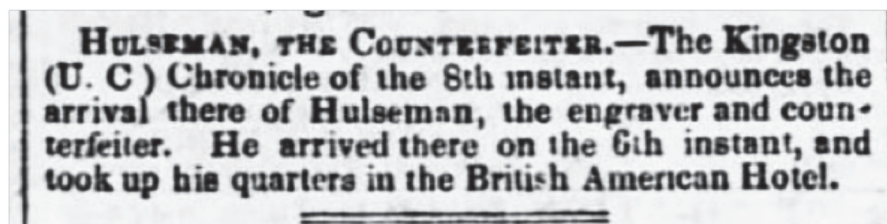


Figure 7. Image courtesy of Newspapers.com.

After finding this reference I then was able to locate the original article from the August 8, 1840, *Kingston Chronicle & Gazette* (Fig. 8):

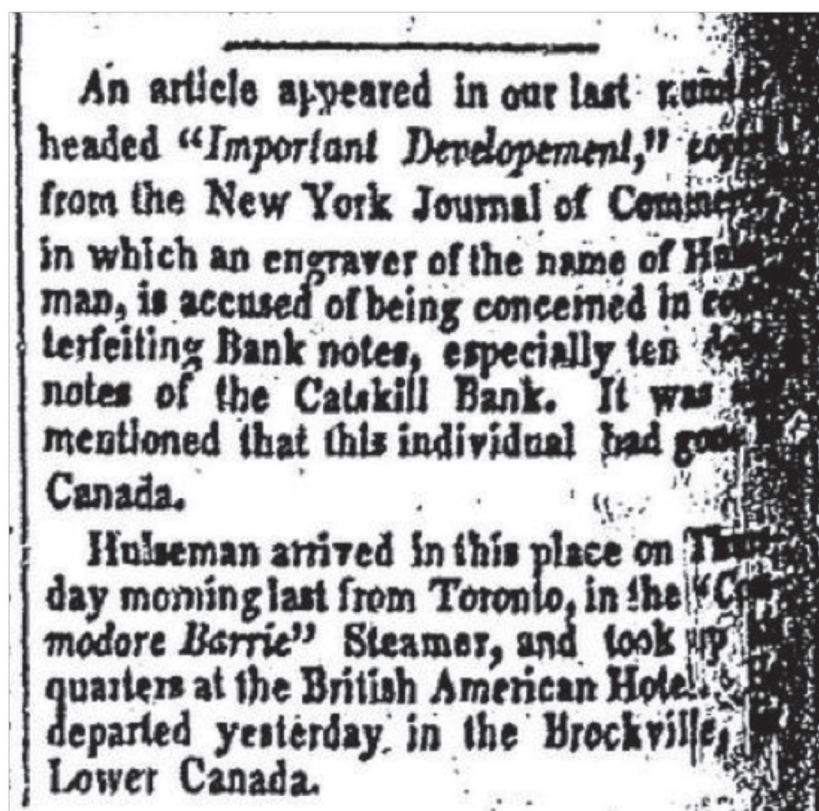


Figure 8. Image courtesy of Google News archive.

This stunning development leads to further speculation and questions. Might Edward Hulseman have stopped in Albany and picked up the True dies on the way from New York City to Canada? Albany was on a direct route utilizing the Hudson River and the Erie Canal system to reach Lake Ontario and Toronto. The city was a logical stop for change of steamer or train etc. It is possible that the report of the confiscation of his dies and equipment may have reached him about the same time as his arrival there.

Did Hulseman travel to Lower Canada and possibly become connected with a group of coiners there? He may have had knowledge of individuals involved in this practice if he had anything to do with the route directed to the pedlar in the Sanbornton, New Hampshire, article.



Based on the description of Hulseman as “a Frenchman...who speaks good English, with a French accent” in the June 27, 1840, *Herald* article, I entertained the possibility that he may have been of French Canadian origin. But further research leads me to conclude he was a more recent European immigrant.

The surname Hulseman looks more Germanic than French. He may conceivably have come from the border region of France and Germany i.e. the Alsace-Lorraine region or Switzerland is another possibility. A search of FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com databases in April, 2015 found very few records for Edward Hulseman.

Two ship passenger references may perhaps refer to him. On November 5, 1836, an Edward Hulsemann, age 32, male, engraver is listed as arriving in Philadelphia from Hamburg aboard the *Galliot Triton*<sup>7</sup> and on June 20, 1851, an E. Hulseman, male from Germany, aged 50 4/12, is listed as arriving in New York City from Bremen on the ship *Washington*.<sup>8</sup>

The 1836 record could fit with what has been previously speculated about Hulseman's years as an active engraver in the United States. He is thought to have worked from about 1833 to 1836 in Attleboro with R. and W. Robinson and/or H. M. and E. I. Richards before opening his shop in New York City in 1837.<sup>9</sup> It may be that he traveled back to Europe sometime in 1836 and the late 1836 passenger list records his return to North America.

An article in the *New York Morning Herald* from October 13, 1837 (Fig. 9), provides more evidence for a European origin with the report that Hulseman engaged in “die sinking in the Paris mint, and has also operated in London.”

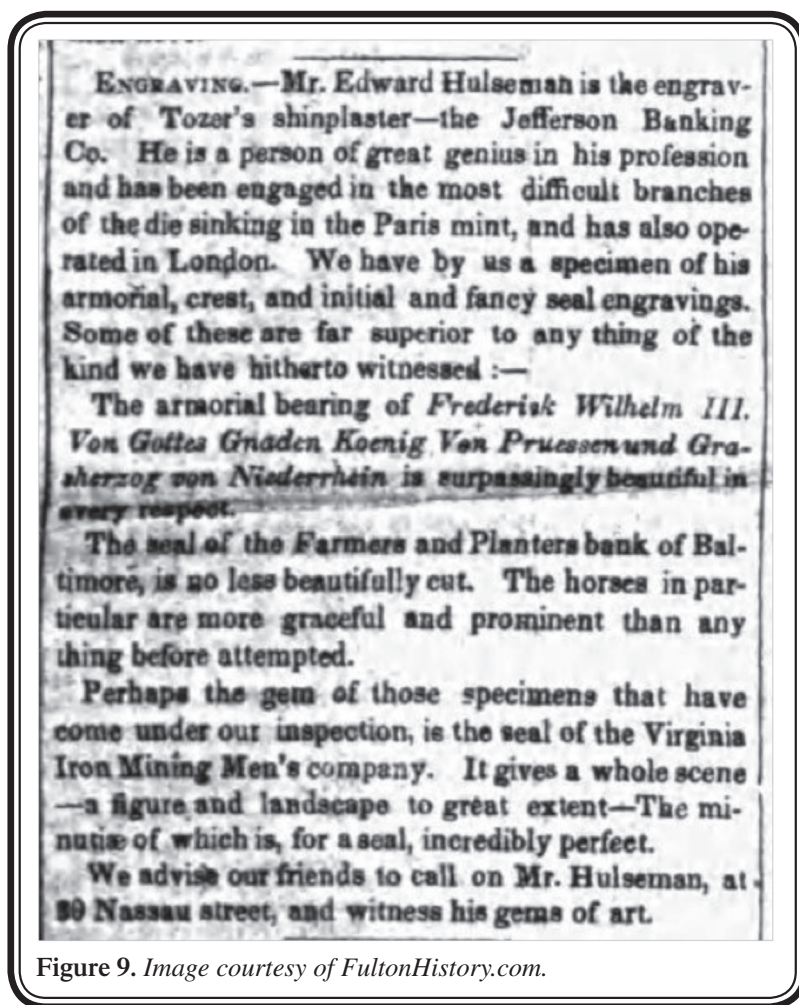


Figure 9. Image courtesy of FultonHistory.com.

In addition, David R. Johnson mentions Hulseman in *Illegal Tender: Counterfeiting and the Secret Service in Nineteenth Century America*:

7 FamilySearch.org, Philadelphia Passenger Lists 1800–1882.

8 Ancestry.com, New York Passenger Lists, 1820–1857.

9 Low 1899; Lindesmith 1967.

Some printers and engravers coped with the tight job market by setting up small independent shops, but their marginal existence meant that they might be willing to undertake illegitimate work on occasion. Edward Hulseman, for example, was an engraver living at 80 Nassau Street in the Second Ward. Claiming that he was returning to Germany to print notes for the Prussian government, Hulseman persuaded several members of a bankrupt printing firm to teach him the necessary techniques. They also sold Hulseman a press and several dies, with which he manufactured counterfeit ten dollar notes on a New York Bank.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Johnson cites the *Indictment of Edward Hulseman, 10 August 1840, Indictment Papers* as his source for the Hulseman information. Following this new lead, I contracted with a New York City researcher and was able to obtain a copy of the Edward Hulseman indictment file from the Municipal Archives. It is notable that my researcher could find no evidence in the Archives to show that Hulseman was prosecuted on the counterfeiting charge. Much of the lengthy indictment file is concerned with one Auguste Sannier who may or may not have been directly involved with Hulseman's counterfeiting activities. He was the individual who agreed to store Hulseman's dies and equipment before his escape to Canada.

The depositions in the indictment file explain how Hulseman obtained the dies from "Messrs. Burton, Edmunds & Co., a respectable bank note engraving company" (*The Evening Post*, July 29, 1840; Fig. 6 above). They also characterize Hulseman as having a certain shrewdness and dexterity for a con game.

On June 11, 1838, the *New York Spectator* ran an article about another incident in which Hulseman was involved with fraudulent bank notes (Fig. 10). However, in this case, Hulseman reportedly informed the police of the scheme.

Of possible interest is the bank for which Hulseman engraved the plates: "A bank, to be established at Three Rivers, Lower Canada [Trois-Rivières, Quebec], called the Provincial Bank." This suggests a connection between Hulseman and individuals in Lower Canada. The Three Rivers

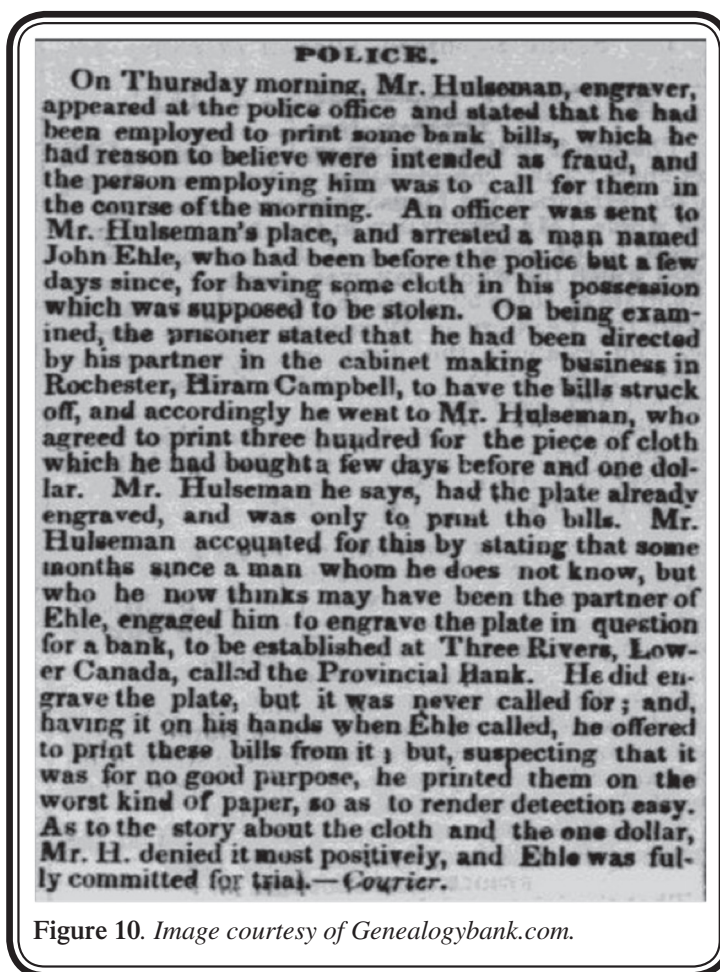


Figure 10. Image courtesy of Genealogybank.com.

10 David R. Johnson, *Illegal Tender: Counterfeiting and the Secret Service in Nineteenth Century America* (Washington, DC, 1995): 11.

area was also a base of operations for "The Notorious Stephen Burroughs."<sup>11</sup> This infamous personality (and counterfeiter) died there on January 23, 1840.

The Three Rivers bank note plate turns up again in the Hulseman indictment file. In the deposition of James R. Burton it is stated that at Hulseman's first meeting with him to learn the "theory of copper plate printing" he "brought with him an old Shin Plaster Plate, for some bank represented to be at Three Rivers in Lower Canada. The title of which deponent does not recollect, from which deponent instructed him how to print." As indicated in the 1838 *New York Spectator* article, Hulseman did in fact already know how to print bank notes. It may be that the request for instruction was just a ruse for Hulseman to get his hands on Burton's presses and equipment, although it is also possible that he truly was attempting to learn another theory of printing and simply took advantage of the opportunity.

The *New York Spectator's* statement that "he printed [the Three Rivers bank notes] on the worst kind of paper, so as to render detection easy" shows Hulseman had a willingness to compromise his work if necessary. It also shows ingenuity and an awareness of the standards of production. Although he was highly skilled, Hulseman was not above producing an inferior product. This adds further plausibility to his identification as the source of some of the tokens of the Blacksmith series—known for their poor strikes, faulty planchets, and compromised dies.

Would Edward Hulseman have known Benjamin True? I find it very possible. Hulseman is believed to have engraved tokens connected with Troy area establishments (i.e., W. P. Haskins, Walsh's General Store).

True joined the Odd Fellows in 1836 and was a prominent figure in that organization in Albany and Cincinnati. He was a member of the "Grand Lodge"<sup>12</sup> and traveled often to New York City and throughout New York State and New England. He was also "Chairman of the Mechanics of the City of Albany" in 1841 and in a co-signed letter to the New York State Senate indicated that he had been at "State conventions" for mechanics in 1833 and 1834.<sup>13</sup> True's travels and involvement in these organizations would have provided an excellent opportunity for him to have made Hulseman's acquaintance.

In the October 18, 1838, *New York Morning Herald*, there is a follow-up article to the report of the arrest of a Daniel Harrington of Massachusetts, who contracted with Hulseman to prepare half dollar coin dies. Hulseman apparently went to the authorities and Harrington was arrested "with a large quantity of German silver."<sup>14</sup>

In the original reports, the engraver (Hulseman) was erroneously identified by the name of "Harris," but the *Herald* article corrects, stating, "We make this statement in justice to a very meritorious artist, who has long practiced the art of die sinking, which is so rare and difficult of attainment, that only two persons in this city are able to perform it with any degree of elegance and accuracy."

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11 Born in Connecticut in 1765, Stephen Burroughs spent his youth in Hanover, New Hampshire. His legendary exploits were glorified in his autobiographies: *Memoirs of Stephen Burroughs* (1798 printed by Benjamin True. Mostly known for counterfeiting bank notes, he moved his operations north of the border to the Stanstead, Lower Canada, area at the turn of the nineteenth century. Burroughs was said to have reformed in his later years and was a "devout Catholic" when he died at Trois Rivières, Quebec in 1840.

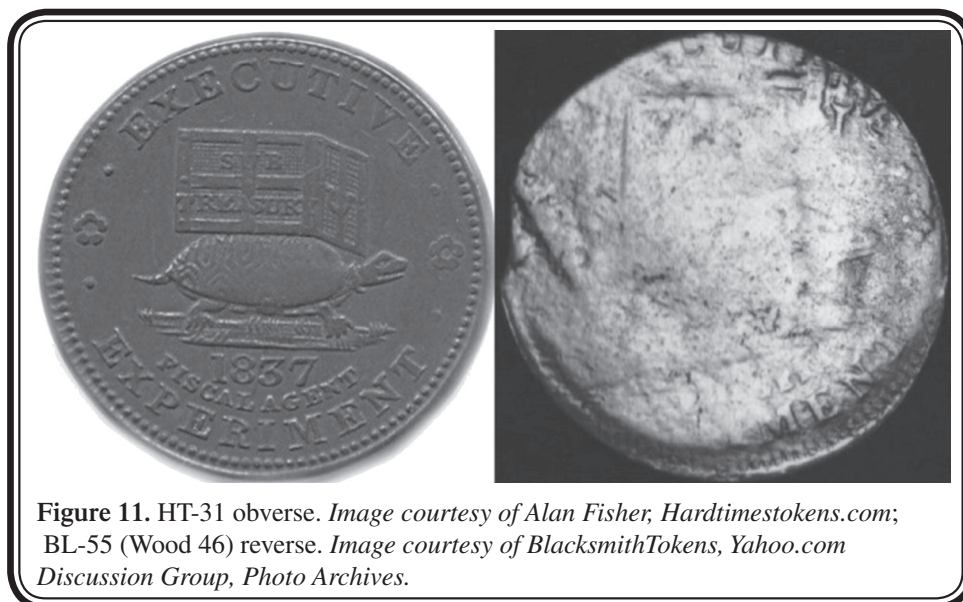
12 *The Ark, and Odd Fellows' Western Monthly* 2-4 (1845): 63.

13 *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, Sixty-Fourth Session* 1841, vol. III, no. 91.

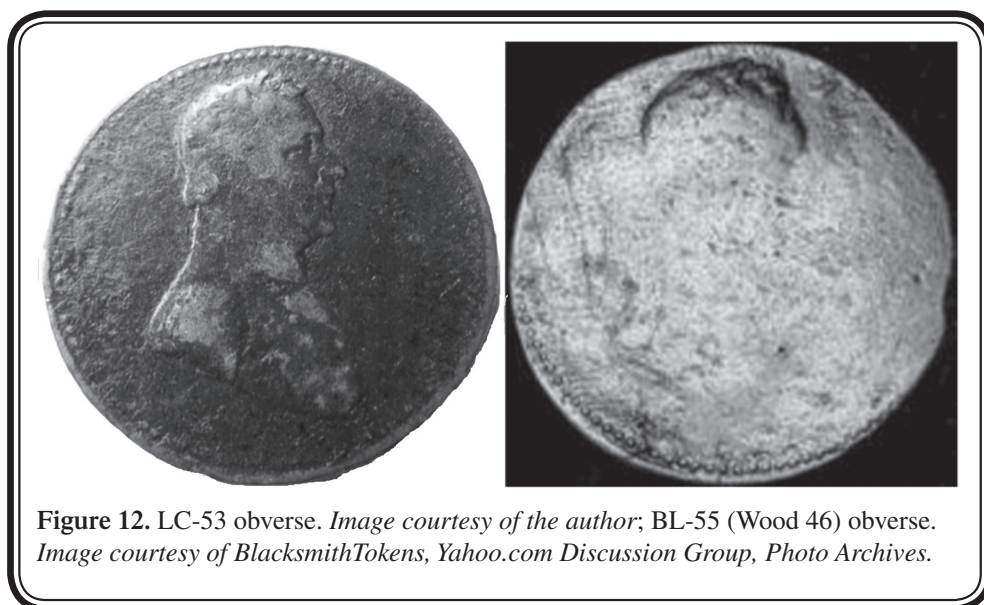
14 *Massachusetts Spy*, October 31, 1838.



It seems logical that, as members of the small fraternity of die-sinkers and by engaging in much the same line of work, the paths of Hulseman and True would have crossed at some point or that, at the very least, they would have known of each other.



Hulseman's escape to Canada may also explain the existence of the BL-55 (Wood 46) Blacksmith with a reverse of "A safe on the back of a tortoise with a partial legend" (Charlton). A photo of one of these rare pieces (Fig. 11) reveals the reverse to be struck from an "Executive Experiment" Hard Times token die (possibly HT-31 or one of the others that have been attributed to Hulseman).



The obverse of BL-55 (Wood 46) is described as "Part of a head facing right." There are very few details visible but the outline of the bust and the beaded border bear a resemblance to the Lower Canada token LC-53A1 with "Military Bust of Salaberry" (Fig. 12).

I have been unable to locate photographs for another token included in the Charlton Blacksmiths section— BL-52 (Wood unlisted). This token is described in the seventh edition of the Charlton catalogue as having an obverse “Bust similar to LC-51” and a reverse “U.S. Hard Times token, similar to Wood 25, 27, 28 and 29 which are the Starbuck and U & C. Peck reverse.” These have been established as the True dies.

Strangely, the token listed under LC-51 (the 1814 Richard Hurd halfpenny token) does not have a bust design component. Perhaps LC-51 was cited in error and LC-53 was the intended reference? If so, this would provide a die link between Hulseman and True. A study of BL-52 is necessary in order to make this determination. I have not been able to discover the whereabouts of any examples of this token and some collectors even debate its existence.<sup>15</sup> The recently-released ninth edition of the Charlton catalogue revises the description of this token slightly. The reference to LC-51 has been omitted and the obverse is now described only as a “Bust facing right.”

The 1840 *Annual Statement of the Comptroller for the City of New York* lists a police expenditure of \$56.75 for “Pursuit of E. Hulseman, charged with Forgery.” Sannier’s deposition in the indictment file repeats that Hulseman “begged” and “pressed” him to help him and “save his goods and utensils, that they consisted of all his fortune and that of his wife and child.” It is probable that since Hulseman had to hurry out of New York to evade arrest he only had time to bring a small number of dies and/or other pieces of equipment with him to Canada. The contents of the indictment file imply that he intended his stash of these items to be shipped to him once he was reestablished.

A stop in Albany to pick up the old True dies may be the reason there are more die examples connected with Benjamin True in the Blacksmith series than the sole die possibly connected with Edward Hulseman. These dies would also be something sought after by a desperate Hulseman heading into Canada as a wanted man with possibly few possessions or connections.

Researchers have theorized that the Hard Times Tokens of Benjamin True struck on Blacksmith flans and/or muled with Blacksmith dies were minted by True and shipped to Canada. Another possibility is that the Hard Times Tokens dies (N. Starbuck & Son and J & C. Peck) were shipped there and muled with existing Blacksmith dies.<sup>16</sup> Another possibility is that Benjamin True also produced the “bust facing left” and “seated Britannia” dies for BL-40 (Wood 23) and only the eagle dies and the Rising Sun Tavern die were produced in Canada.<sup>17</sup>

I tend to favor the view that the more commonly found BL-40 (Wood 23) was already being minted in Lower Canada before 1840 and Hulseman’s arrival. I remain uncommitted about the origin of the Rising Sun Tavern die but I think it is possible that the established True dies did travel with Hulseman to Canada, where he joined with or sold the dies to an existing minting operation. This may also explain why the tokens struck from these dies are comparatively rare. Generally, 1840 is considered the approximate end of the mintage period for the Blacksmiths.

It is also possible that the bust die, which bears a resemblance to the British halfpenny of King George III and was used for BL-40–BL-43 (Wood 23–26), was phased out first and the True dies and mules were favored in the later period. An article in the March 28, 1839, *Western Herald* (Sandwich, Ontario) reprints a notice from the *Quebec Gazette* indicating that “the British Coin”

15 See Blacksmith Tokens, Yahoo Discussion Group, “BL-52 Is any information available?” (April 2015).

16 John Lorenzo, “Canadian Blacksmith Tokens and the New York Connection,” *C4 Newsletter* 6.2 (Summer, 1998): 43–50.

17 Anonymous. “McLauchlan’s Blacksmith: His Tokens,” No Date. Essay in files of Blacksmith Tokens, Yahoo Discussion Group.

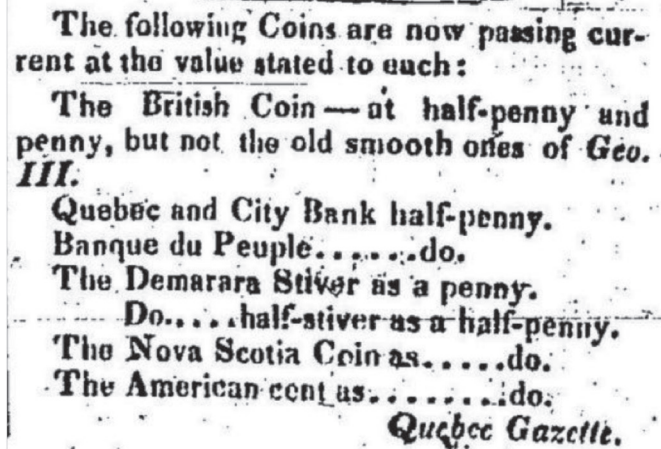
would still pass at value "but not the old smooth ones of Geo. III." The "American cent" and four other coins or tokens are also listed as acceptable currency (Fig. 13).

Yet even with this 1839 notice it is possible that in some areas of Lower Canada the "old smooth ones of Geo. III" did still pass in local commerce for a few more years.

It is unclear how long Hulseman may have remained in Canada. By June of 1841 he was involved in a legal case against Joseph L. Lewis, an engraver from

Hoboken, New Jersey, stemming from events in 1839 that occurred prior to the counterfeiting charge. However, I am uncertain if Hulseman was actually present in New Jersey at this time. Lewis is alleged to have assaulted him on the ferry boat from Manhattan to Hoboken in May of 1839. Later that night, Hulseman arranged a motley posse of friends and law enforcement officials to rouse Lewis from his bed and perform a sort of mock trial at a local tavern.<sup>18</sup>

This notice of a related action by Lewis against Hulseman is from the May 16, 1839, *New York Spectator*:



The following Coins are now passing current at the value stated to each:

The British Coin — at half-penny and penny, but not the old smooth ones of Geo. III.

Quebec and City Bank half-penny.

Banque du Peuple . . . . .do.

The Demarara Stiver as a penny.

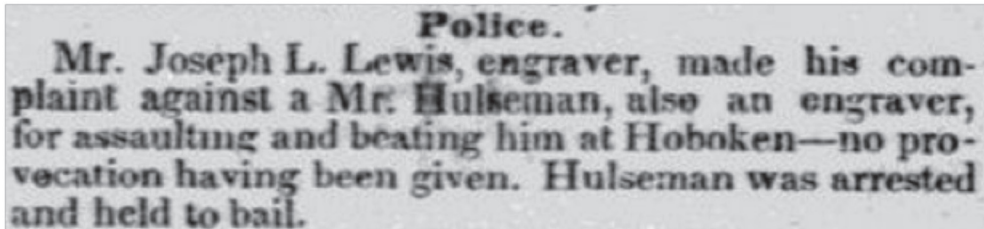
Do . . . . half-stiver as a half-penny.

The Nova Scotia Coin as . . . . .do.

The American cent as . . . . .do.

Quebec Gazette.

Figure 13. Image courtesy of OurOntario.ca.



Police.

Mr. Joseph L. Lewis, engraver, made his complaint against a Mr. Hulseman, also an engraver, for assaulting and beating him at Hoboken—no provocation having been given. Hulseman was arrested and held to bail.

Figure 14. Image courtesy of GenealogyBank.com.

Joseph L. Lewis is a noteworthy figure as well. In the biography of engraver Archibald McLees published in volume 31 of *Penman's Art Journal* the following passage appears:

(McLees) became connected with Durand & Co., a new firm of bank note engravers, as an engraver of letters, but the new concern was not well managed and did not last long. In 1838 he joined the force of letter engravers of the bank note engraving firm of Hall, Packard & Cushman, in Albany, N. Y., who had the contract to engrave and print bank note currency of small denomination under the law of 1838.

After a year in Albany he returned to New York and entered the employ of David Felt, in Brooklyn. From there he went to work for Edward Hulseman, die sinker and engraver,

<sup>18</sup> "The People v. Joseph L. Lewis, on an Indictment for Perjury," *The New York Herald* (July 1, 1841).

at 80 Nassau street, in whose employ he engraved his first copy books, a German series.

Hulseman was a pupil of Joseph L. Lewis, of Hoboken, who had an engraving establishment at No. 3 Wall Street, and who bequeathed a million dollars to the United States Government in gratitude for the emancipation of the negro slaves in the South, to which race Lewis's mother belonged.

Hulseman got into difficulties with the United States Government and fled to Europe, and Mr. McLees for the first time carried on an engraving business in his own name at 80 Nassau street until the old building was about to be torn down and replaced by the present one at that address. He moved his business to 170 Broadway, where he remained two years. This was about 1849.

Along with placing Hulseman in Europe and indicating that Lewis and Hulseman had a prior business relationship, this passage also shows that McLees, an employee of Hulseman at the time, had connections in Albany.

Based on his business relationship with Hulseman, Joseph L. Lewis should at least be considered by researchers of Hard Times Tokens as the possible engraver of some of the yet unattributed dies—particularly those found to have been muled with Hulseman dies.

I would also propose that, given his heritage and personal history, he may be connected to the abolitionist “Am I Not a Woman” token dated 1838 (HT-81). This token modifies an eighteenth-century British Conder Token to make the subject a woman instead of a man, perhaps alluding to the established race of Lewis’ mother and his close connection to the abolitionist cause.

Lewis’ will was contested by a woman claiming to be his widow and was later found to be a “notorious female confidence operator.” Ironically, the case was dismissed after the marriage certificate was determined to be a clever forgery.<sup>19</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* reported that Lewis’ estate was estimated to have a value of \$1.8 million dollars—a staggering amount at that time.

Hulseman is credited with engraving the 1847 Hawaiian cent (Breen 8028–8029), however I have not been able to confirm the source for this attribution.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps if Hulseman’s history and the likelihood that he was not even located in the United States at the time had been known to Breen he would not have connected him to that particular coin so readily. Any additional information on this subject would be greatly appreciated.

A renewed study of Hulseman’s die work utilizing the historical perspective offered by this paper may lead to new discoveries. New indexes of contemporary newspapers and other archives are being made available with each passing day. I am hopeful that this paper inspires others to look more closely at these topics. I will continue to do so and if any additional pertinent evidence comes to light I will update this paper.

### Acknowledgements

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<sup>19</sup> “Millionaire Lewis’ Will,” *The Chicago Tribune*, February 4, 1880.

<sup>20</sup> Walter Breen, *Walter Breen’s Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins* (New York, 1988): 671–672.